

# MAINE PUBLIC HEALTH ALERT NETWORK SYSTEM

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*Maine Department of Health and Human Services  
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC)  
(Formerly Bureau of Health)  
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***\*\*ADVISORY – Important Information\*\****

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**2010PHADV013**

**TO:** All Public & Private College Administrators, All CDC Roles, All Childcare Roles, All City & County Health Departments, All Healthcare Groups, All Lab Facilities, MEMA Duty Officers, County EMA Directors, Northern New England Poison Center, Public Health Required, Public Health Nursing, All EMS, All RRC, State & Federal Agencies

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**SUBJECT:** Pertussis In Maine: Advisory For Clinicians

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Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC)  
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## **Pertussis in Maine: Advisory for Clinicians**

Pertussis is still a problem in Maine and clinicians should consider the possibility of pertussis when evaluating a person with a chronic cough. So far in 2010 Maine has seen 11 confirmed cases of pertussis with 8 of those reported in the past month. The most recent cases range from 2 years to 36 years of age and 7 of the 8 cases are younger than 14 years old. Of these 8 cases 4 reside in Cumberland, 3 in Penobscot and 1 in Lincoln County. This advisory provides recommendations for the evaluation and management of pertussis.

1. Consider pertussis when evaluating any patient with an acute illness characterized by cough >2 weeks in duration, or cough with paroxysms, whoop, or post-tussive vomiting. Infants may present with apnea and/or cyanosis.
2. Report known or suspected cases promptly to the Maine CDC at 1-800-821-5821.
3. Persons who exhibit symptoms consistent with pertussis should be tested for pertussis with a nasopharyngeal swab. The state Health and Environmental Testing Laboratory (HETL) tests specimens by culture and polymerase chain reaction (PCR) in addition to other reference labs in the state. Serologic testing through private laboratories has not been well standardized and should not be used.
4. Individuals with suspected pertussis should be treated after a nasopharyngeal specimen is collected for testing. Guidelines for antibiotic treatment for pertussis cases and contacts have been published by the federal CDC in the MMWR (December 9, 2005. RR-14) and are available at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5414a1.htm>
5. Individuals with symptoms of pertussis should be considered to be infectious and should not attend school, work, or daycare until they have completed 5 days of an appropriate antibiotic. This is especially important for persons working in medical settings or with infants and young children.
6. Children under age 7 should be up-to-date for pertussis immunization. The two new pertussis-containing vaccines for adolescents and adults are not yet available through the state immunization program.
7. For more information on pertussis control measures, please go to [www.cdc.gov/nip/publications/pertussis/guide.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nip/publications/pertussis/guide.htm), or call 1-800-821-5821.